

# BLUE GLASS BLAINE

A. T. Parker  
High and Ashland East Side  
Belo  
Side

WE AIM TO CUT DOWN ERROR AND ESTABLISH TRUTH.

VOLUME XVI. NUMBER 8

LEXINGTON, KY., JUNE 9, 1907

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, \$1.50 A YEAR IN ADVANCE

## THE TRUTH COMES FROM ABROAD

### Sanctified Hypocrites Meet With Failure in England and Big Audiences Nothing but Empty Seats

(By C. Cohen.)

Torrey and Alexander have been in England.

It was natural that their efforts should meet with success as a leading press will testify.

The truth is, after all, that their trip was a failure as will be understood by the following from the pen of C. Cohen, the London Free-thinker. He says:—

Not very long ago, the religious press was filled with accounts of the numerous conversions that were daily being made to the Christian ranks. At that time the Torrey-Alexander Mission was in full swing, and it had been preceded by the Welsh revival under Evan Roberts, as that had been preceded by the United Free Church Mission and similar movements. And since these missions, that were, so it was reported, securing souls by the thousands, leading to a great spiritual revival, etc., there have been numerous assurances that materialism is quite discredited, and that the higher spiritual philosophy has been winning all along the line. Of course, those who had any conception of the facts of the case took all these statements with a grain of salt. They knew that for what they were worth, and were content to let Christian romancists get all the attribution possible. It is less than a hundred years since good books in an hour than can be the Catholic Church admitted the revolution of the earth. And now, in the twentieth century, we are to be so truly a couple of centuries before.

Outsiders knew all along what these Christian captures were worth. While Messrs. Torrey and Alexander were preaching at the Albert Hall to vast congregations, many of the daily papers published the lie about packed audiences and crowds turned away. The same journals repeated the tales of Torrey's converts, although, on two of the papers, it is stated that Torrey seemed to be the only one present who could see them. He discovered them with the eye of faith. Those who know how this mission business is run know that these statistics of conversion are pure lies. Apart from the positive lies which hardly any of these professional missionaries shrink from telling, the genuine responses to the call for souls comes from those who visit missions, get saved at each, much as a confirmed drunkard would make a round of the public houses, and a system of free drinks exist. The monotony of the identical phraseology, and the identical phraseology, are alone enough to show that we are dealing with experienced hands at the game. The net result of which is that all these missions are run to provide a little mental stimulation for a number of Christians who are too mentally flabby to seek it in other directions, and far too lacking in soundness of character to develop the outlet of a healthy vice. Apart from this, their only function is to provide employment for a number of specialists in revivalism, a class of men who would certainly be tolerated in a healthy-organized community.

Sooner or later the Churches must take their courage in both hands and face facts, and the Christian World, in a leading article on the subject, takes a gloomy view of the situation. It points out that the figures of Wesleyan Methodist Church, showing a decrease of 200 full members, 2,000 junior members, and over 6,000 on trial, are disquieting to all believers; the more so because the Wesleyan Church is symptomatic of the rest. The most successful cannot keep pace with the growth of population; the least successful show an actual decrease. When Free-thinkers are

asked for evidence of the success of their propaganda they might well point to these figures and these lamentations. Every person who drops out of the ranks of the believers does not chronicle his defection—very few do; and we have no waiting form and offer no encouragement to personal testimony. But the result is there, and is shown in the figures and in the lamentations. We fight with time and evolution on our side, and can afford to look with confidence to the result.

When it comes to deal with the causes of the Church slump, the Christian perception of their real nature, and obviously lacks the courage to press its supposition too closely. It thinks that the rush from village to town, and over the migrations within the city from centre to suburb, may be responsible for much of the leakage. So, too, it may immediately, but not ultimately. If religious belief was nowadays a matter of genuine conviction, and church membership more than a social convention, these would not be at the mercy of a migration from village to town, or from town to suburb. It is really because religious belief nowadays is little more than a social convention, often supported from a few mercenary motives, that when a rash finds itself released from its social leash, falls away, is given up by its real feelings and opinions. It means that people can only be kept up to the religious standard so long as coercion of some sort is applied. Abolish this, give each person freedom of belief, and churches and chapels would soon become howling wildernesses of empty benches.

So, too, with the cause found in the unpopularity of preaching, or of the Church, or of the man, and the message will always have its influence. Still, no one can study the modern pulpit without realising that what the people want is to be entertained, and what the most popular preachers do is to try and entertain them. The entertainment being given, people will go to church, other things equal, as they go to a music hall, or a theatre, and frequently stay away for the same reason.

The things named by the Christian World are not causes, but symptoms. The real causes lie much deeper than anything touched on by the writer of the article, and these are that the Church no longer possesses any social or intellectual vitality. Even ordinary people are beginning to realise that on no single subject of importance has any of the churches an independent message to deliver in its own hearing. For all their sciences, their philosophy, or their metaphysics, they have to turn elsewhere. All they get within the churches is a very faint echo of the best that can be got outside. They are so accustomed to this that they have ceased to regard it as in any way remarkable that they have to go to outsiders for the truest knowledge on the matter still, accustomed as people are to this, and assenting to it as they do, the absurdity of maintaining an army of men with nothing important to teach, and nothing of any value to do, gradually forces itself upon them. People are no longer easily imposed upon by the supposed learning or power of the clergy. Outside influences teach them how much this is worth, and their own experiences show it. If people read they would find that more can be got from a gathered sermon in a month. If they think, they realise what a game of make-believe the whole thing is; while a growing number agree with Ruskin that:

"In general, any man's becoming a clergyman in this age implies that, at best, his sentiment has overpowered his intellect; and that whatever the blindness of the latter, the victory

of his impertinent piety has been probably owing to its alliance with his conceit, and its promise being regarded as an oracle, without the trouble of becoming wise or the grief of being so."

The Christian World writer thinks the position demands a search for remedies rather than causes. But to get true remedies one must have a knowledge of causes, otherwise little that can be done will be of avail. And in this case, the only remedies that would be of use are impossible. If the united action of the churches can possibly cover the globe into a plane, and set the sun travelling round it instead of it travelling round the sun; if gravitation can be abolished and mystical affluities reintroduced; if education can be replaced by miracle, and natural forces by spirits; if evolution can be replaced by special creation, and brain diseases by domesticated possession; if heaven can be abolished, and education and earth repossessed by the army of supernatural beings and powers destroyed during the development of modern science, then, and only then, would it be possible that one they would not hesitate to use if they could. But if these things cannot be done, then the case is truly hopeless.

For, really, nothing less than a revolution of this kind can ever set back to religion its lost power. All religion is built upon the belief that the world is ruled by arbitrary supernatural intelligence, and has no real validity apart from that conviction. The clergyman is fundamental; the miracle-worker, the intermediary between man and the supposed supernatural for a cash consideration. This function is seen plainly enough in the savage medicine-man. It is almost equally evident with the Catholic priest, and it can be seen in the ordination of the Protestant clergyman and in the "call" of the dissenting preacher. All the power and influence of the clergy depends upon this belief, no matter how modified or disguised it may be. But really educated people no longer believe in the interference of the supernatural on account of their superior learning. This might have been done while education was the privilege of a few, and the ability to read and write suggested something of an occult quality. But reading and writing is now universal. The clergy are no longer looked up to, they are rather looked down upon. No one of any standing chooses to identify himself as a clergyman, while as a class they are mentally inferior to any other body of educated men in the community. They have had their day, and can only maintain themselves by pandering to passion and prejudice, and acting as the protectors of interest that but for them, might have long since disappeared.

The problem for the Christian World to solve is if it would save Christianity, then, simple—in statement. It is to find out how to turn back the whole tide, of civilisation and to recreate the mental and social condition of the Dark Ages. Only this, and nothing more.

## CHILD LABOR IN NATION

Approved by a New York Banker Who  
Keeps An Eye Upon His Interest  
And Dividend Payments.

REFUSES DONATIONS AND  
GIVES HIS REASONS

(By Stella Hardie)

None need expect that the Hon. and the lands could agree upon questions of personal policy that would be acceptable to both. The Hon. says are not the lands' ways. Then one need not be surprised that a New York banker failed to agree with those who are seeking to stamp out child labor in the United States. I have been deeply impressed with the perusal of two letters which appeared in the New York Commercial a few days ago. Associated with Felix Adler, and other humanitarians in the work of protecting children of the nation, to save them and spare them from becoming dwarfed both mentally and physically by close confinement, at a tender age, in the mills and factories, is Mrs. Lillian D. Wald, of New York. It will be seen from the correspondence that she had addressed a letter to a New York bank-

er asking that he contribute to the cause of the emancipation of little children. He replied, but instead of agreeing with the lady he took a firm stand in favor of working of the children and I presume it can only be on the ground that it insures the payment of interests and dividends. I am content to let the Hon. bankers judge for themselves if you can find room for the letters, which are as follows:—

Mrs. Bowen's Letter  
"Dear Mr. Bowen: Do you know that thousands of our little undeveloped children are working for wages in sweatshops, glass factories, textile mills and coal mines? Will you be one of the 1,000 persons in the United States who are giving \$25 each to help emancipate them?"

"The national child labor committee has undertaken an immense task. The endorsement of President Roosevelt, ex-President Cleveland and hundreds of our foremost citizens prove the worthlessness of our cause. We are leading an anti-child labor movement that is growing so rapidly we cannot keep up with it unless we have more funds. We are leading in an anti-child labor movement that is growing so rapidly that we cannot keep up with it unless we have more funds. Two million boys and girls, under 16, in this country are working while other children play and go to school."

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The reply to that letter. Mr. Bowen replied in part, as follows:—

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## HOW THE DOOM OF DOGMA CAME

### The Intellectual Food Offered by Theology Only Created Doubt and Led to a Complete Rejection of Faith

(By Henry Frank.)

In a series of articles written by Henry Frank and published in Transition, the author portrays his transition from blind faith to right reason and in showing the point at which the final change came, says:

The struggle with any conscience was becoming intense. I was being forced to ask myself whether I was paying with my own soul and if the time must not inevitably come when I would throw the dice and cross the Rubicon.

More and more I heard the doctrines which I had learned myself to believe as the truth shook at and slowly shook among the very men who in public so grandly stood as their sponsors and proud defenders. At last after arduous studying "Browne on the atonement" which purported to be a reasonable and incontrovertible defense of the traditional doctrine, dressed, however, in modern habilitations, I made bold to write out my interpretation, which was the conflict with him, and yet which I believed was a logical conclusion because founded on the very premises which he himself set forth.

It was a beautiful autumn day in Wisconsin. Three of us were drifting in a canoe down the Wisconsin delta of far niente lakes. One was a young man who has since been recognized as one of the most successful pulpits orators and platform lecturers in the Methodist Church and who in those days was one of my particular chums. The other possessed of a more practical mind, has since been given the opportunity to develop his genius by being made one of the assistants of the Methodist Book Concern, a very responsible position in this great church.

When the poise of our spirits had come to reflect the sweet calmness of the deep blue sky above and the placid green waters beneath, and we were in such mental mood as to be receptive of intellectual food and mental stimulation, I drew from my breast-pocket the little manuscript I had written in criticism of the "Atonement," and with permission slowly read it to them.

Arduously they listened, with minds critically inclined. Occasionally they would look at each other and express either approval or surprise. But whatever their feelings, they respected mine and clearly saw that I was sincere and earnest. That, indeed I had made it clear to them that the paper was a personal document and confessed the burden of my heart no less than the thoughts of my brain, was soon made evident. At last I finished. A dead silence settled on us all. I was embarrassed. I wanted honest criticism. I heard what might mean either disdain or laudation.

Finally my nearest chum, with whom I had long been engaged in mental wrestling matches and who has since developed into the most popular rhetorician in the church, ventured an opinion. But it was not a criticism. It was indifference per se. "Why on earth, Frank, do you want to waste your time in re-reading the dead past and trying to reconstruct it in line with the living present? The 'Atonement' isn't meant in these days to demand our reasoning powers but our powers of imagination. There is no room in the history of man that can be made as to excite the lacrimal glands of the crowd as the picture of Jesus on the Cross. I dwell on that and not on the theology of the Atonement, and you'll carry the audience with you every time."

"But," I said, "brother, you don't mean to insist that religion is all feeling and that reason and thought have no serious place in it?"

"No, of course not. But you must learn the art of the semblance of

reasoning without actually performing it. If you want to hold the crowd. What the people want in these days is pictorial eloquence and warm action in delivery. That captures them every time."

"Do you mean to tell me the church has come to this? Do our audiences consist of nothing more than assemblages of emotional animals whom we must tickle, as the visitors of the Zoo tickle the elephants with peanuts and candy?"

The practical and commercially inclined member of this social club, blurted out in a blunder and more momentary fashion: "Frank, listen to me, do you or don't you want to remain in the Methodist ministry?"

"Naturally, I intend to remain."

"Well, then, take the advice of a friend; burn up the manuscript and never let the Elder or Bishop know that you entertained such notions. If you do, it's all day with you."

Disquiet mingled with condemnation in my heart and I responded by saying that if it meant the attestation of my conscience and the price I might pay for my ministerial berth I was beginning to think I would prefer to sacrifice the latter to the former, so the years were wearing away and more and more the conviction was coming to me that all the youthful sacrifices, social, domestic, commercial, professional, I had made for the sake of becoming a minister in an orthodox church were worse than the spendthrift follies of a cad. What had chiefly disappointed me was that the chiefly disappointed me was that the arguments I had advanced were manifestly unanswerable by these two leading church lights, and yet despite the truthfulness of my contention they preferred to swallow the violation of intellectual candor and maintain an air of faith and retaining a respectable social position.

To one who has experienced the painful suffering such disclosures bring there is something pitifully naïve in the critical remarks of some of the reviewers of "The Book of Dogma," who prate about the apparent dishonesty of a man continuing to preach in a church whose doctrinal standards he has been forced to concede, almost to reject, are so much unanswerable by these two leading church lights, and yet despite the truthfulness of my contention they preferred to swallow the violation of intellectual candor and maintain an air of faith and retaining a respectable social position.

Nevertheless, in the course of time the spiritual burden must carry who struggles to rise above the "anomalies of conscience" that he may adjust himself to the requirements of traditional respectability, becomes almost too cautious to be endured. Just as I was approaching the pinnacle of my youthful ambitions and my name was beginning to be heard in the annals of the church, it began to be apparent to me that not many months would transpire before the public confession would become necessary and the abandonment of the ministry a conscientious obligation.

The last crushing experience encountered at the disappointing period was the naughtiest relief the authorities of the church evince when one has been to them, "a thorn in the flesh" concludes to retire from the ranks.

It was at one of the largest conferences in the Northwest, in the dust of the twilight, immediately preceding adjournment sine die, that then to me a depressing confession was made. It was the sensation that shocked the quiet hours of the conference session. It had been well known to all the

(Continued on Page 4)

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Sanctified Hypocrites Meet With Failure in England and Big Audiences Nothing but Empty Seats

(By C. Cohen.)

Torrey and Alexander have been in England.

It was natural that their efforts should meet with success as a today's press will testify.

The truth is, after all, that the trip was a failure as will be understood by the following from the pen of C. Cohen in the London Free-thinker. He says:—

Not very long ago, the religious press was filled with accounts of the numerous conversions that were daily being made to the Christian ranks. At that time the Torrey-Alexander mission was in full swing, and it had been preceded by the Welsh revival under Evan Roberts, as that had been preceded by the United Free Church Mission and similar movements. And since these missions, that were, so it was reported, securing souls by the thousands, leading to a great spiritual revival, etc., there have been numerous assurances that materialism is quite discredited, and that the higher spiritual philosophy has been winning its way along the line. Of course, those who had any conception of the facts of the case took all these statements for what they were worth, and were quite content to let Christian missionaries get all the association publicity and the laudatory productions. Facts remain facts when all is said and done, and the tendency of the age is not likely to be reversed by the ill-considered, publications of hysterical religious fanatics. In a hundred years since good books in any other than the Catholic Church admitted the revolution of the earth around the sun, but schoolboys know it to be so nearly a couple of centuries before.

Considerers know all along what these Christian captives were worth. While Messrs. Torrey and Alexander were preaching at the Albert Hall to sparse congregations, many of the daily papers published the accounts of packed audiences and crowds turned away. The same journals repeated the tales of Torrey's converts, although one or two of the papers reported that they seemed to be the only ones present who could see them. He discerned them with the eye of faith. Those who know how this mission business is run know how worthless these statistics of conversions are. Apart from this, the professional missionaries shrink from telling, the genuine response to the call for souls comes from those who visit mission houses as a cultured drunkard would make a round of the public houses, did a system of free drinks exist. The monotony of the "experience" recounted, and the identical phraseology used, are alone enough to show that we are dealing with experienced hands at the game. The net result of which is that to all these missions are run to provide a little artificial dissipation for a variety of idle people in other directions, and far too lacking in soundness of character to develop the outlet of a healthy vitality. Apart from this, their only purpose is to provide employment for a number of specialists in revivification, a class of men who would certainly not be tolerated in a health-organized community.

Sooner or later the Churches must take their courage in both hands and face facts, and the Christian World, in a leading article on the subject, takes a gloomy view of the situation. It points out that the figures of Wesleyan Methodist Church, showing a decrease of 200 full members, 2,000 junior members, and over 5,000 on trial, are disquieting to all believers; the more so because the Wesleyan Church is symptomatic of the rest. The most successful cannot keep pace with the growth of population; the least successful show an actual decrease. When Free-thinkers are

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For, really, nothing less than a revolution of this kind can ever get back to religion its lost power. All religion is built upon the belief that the world is ruled by arbitrary supernatural intelligence, and has no real validity apart from that conception. The clergyman is fundamentally the miracle-worker, the intermediary between man and the supposed supernatural for a cash consideration. This function is seen plainly enough in the savage and semi-civilized, and is most equally evident with the Catholic priest, and it can be seen in the ordination of the Protestant clergyman, and in the "call" of the dissenting preacher. All the power and the influence of the clergy depends upon this belief, no matter how modified or disguised it may be. But really educated people no longer believe in the intercessory power of the clergy. Nor can they look up to the clergy on account of their superior learning. This might have been done while education was the privilege of a few, and the ability to read and write suggested something of an elevated quality. But reading and writing is now universal. The clergy are no longer looked up to, they are rather looked down upon. No one of any standing values their opinion as a clergyman, while as a class they are mentally inferior to any other body of educated men in the community. They have had their day, and can only maintain themselves by padding out papers and pulpits, and acting as the protectors of interest that but for them, might have long since disappeared.

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Disquiet mingled with condemnation in my heart and I responded by saying that if it meant the stultification of my conscience and the price I must pay for my ministerial berth I would prefer to the latter to the former. So the years were wearing away and more and more the conviction was coming to me that all the youthful sacrifices, social, domestic, commercial, professional, I had made for the sake of becoming a minister in an orthodox church were worse than the spendthrift follies of a cad. What had chiefly disappointed me was that the argument which I had so earnestly and steadfastly unanswerable by these leading church lights, and yet despite the truthfulness of my contention they preferred to swallow the violation of the intellectual canon and maintain an air of faith and retaining a respectable social position.

To one who has experienced the painful suffering such disclosures must there is something pitifully naïve in the critical remarks of some of the ill-timed animal who doom of dogma," who prate about the apparent dishonesty of a man continuing to preach in a church whose doctrinal standards he has been forced conscientiously to reject. It is so much easier for these respectable casars to discover the honesty of a man who still remains in the church and refuses to let the world know his doubts though they be dark as nimbus clouds, than the honest avowal of the man who doubts and yet lingers to confound the insincerity of those whose misadventure has dulled the edge of their conscience and perverted their perceptions of the truth.

Nevertheless, in the course of time the spiritual burden one must carry who struggles to rise above the "anomalies of conscience" that he may adjust himself to the requirements of traditional respectability, becomes altogether too onerous to be endured. Just as I was approaching the pinnacle of my youthful ambitions and my name was beginning to be heard in the annals of the church, it began to be apparent to me that no more months would transpire before the public confession would become necessary and the abandonment of the ministry a conscientious obligation.

The last crushing experience I encountered at the disestablishing period was the manifest refusal the authorities of the church evince when one has been to them, "a thorn in the flesh" concludes to retire from the ranks.

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Founded 1884 and edited by Charles Clinton Moore up to his death, February 7, 1906.

JAMES E. HUGHES, Editor and Publisher  
Subscription Rates:  
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Trial subscription, 10 cents per month.  
All foreign subscription, postpaid, \$2.00 per year.

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## FREETHOUGHT, BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

"Buddhist missionaries are making hundreds of thousands of converts in the United States. The great majority of the converts are educated men who believe that the religion of Buddha fits better with modern scientific views than does Christianity."—Prof. Frederick Starr, of the University of Chicago.

On such an authority we have it that while Christians are sending hiring missionaries to China and Japan in the hope of effecting a conversion to Christianity of the followers of the religion of Buddha, the latter are sending missionaries to this country to proselyte among the Christian adherents and it seems they are meeting with a most remarkable success.

There may be some truth in the oft-repeated assertion that any faith can find a ready following somewhere, but as between the religions that are thus brought into direct conflict the suggestion does not hold good nor does it allow a fair comparison. Christian periodicals boast of the number of converts the missionaries are making in the Orient, but we all know that no truly intelligent man, one who loves his country and his people, ever became a convert to Christianity. We also know that the bulk of the converts come from the ignorant and uneducated, and that the vast majority of them do so with sinister motives, under the influence of some expected and immediate gain or personal reward. On the other hand, Professor Starr assures us that the converts made by the Buddhists in this country are for the most part educated men who accept it as being a religious system in closer harmony with scientific facts than Christianity.

When one considers the route of travel by which Christianity reached this continent the statement of Professor Starr need excite no wonder. When the foundations of this republic were laid the cementing substance was the declaration that all men were equal in this life. This doctrine is purely Buddhist and, therefore, essentially non-Christian. Buddhism asserts the equality of man. Christianity stands for caste. Buddhism creates a feeling of universal brotherhood. Christianity brought a division of the human family into several distinct classes. The Christian system, emanating from India, naturally incorporated and held to the idea of caste, but this notion got a death-blow the moment the Declaration of American Independence was signed and promulgated. This spirit of universal brotherhood is taking with the American people. This is the spirit and essence of Buddhism. It discards the idea of a personal God. It rejects inquiry into an alleged first cause as being unphilosophical and contends that phenomena is all that should be dealt with by our finite minds. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite. This is Buddhism, it is Americanism and it is Free-thought. In all this there are no intermediaries between the creator and the creature, no vicarious action. Each individual is left to work out his own salvation. While Free-thought, based upon purely American ideals, insists that death is a true deliverance from all our worldly ills, the Christian would force upon us the acceptance of a doctrine that leads to the belief that death is only a passage way to new miseries. One need not wonder that Buddhism should appeal to the educated, while Christianity can only gain where ignorance prevails.

With the trend of modern thought, that is intellectual thought, we are more and more impressed with the fact that before the face of history and scientific demonstration the Christian mythology is unable to much longer stand. This mental operation is apparent in all our modern literature. The national intellect daily grows more ashamed of its fables, especially as they relate to theological beliefs and opinions. Each succeeding age will either modify or repudiate them. The divergence comes as between the educated and the ignorant. The former are ready and willing to abandon all the cherished fictions of the past to the lower strata of human society, but many try to replace them with something more suitable. Accepting what Professor Starr says to be a truth, we can then understand why the Buddhist missionaries can succeed so well among the educated Americans and why American missionaries must go to the Orient for converts. This comes because intellect has outgrown faith. Age can no longer give approbation, or demand it.

The next question arises, to what significance do these counter conversions point? The answer is,

an unsettled, dissatisfied public opinion toward them. Persons born in the Buddhist faith accept Christianity, and persons born into the Church of Christ readily abandon it and accept the Buddhist philosophy. All this suggests a desire for change. Then we have the further suggestion that change becomes the order of the universe and affects men as it does all else. This change operates upon the minds of all and the ultimate is that all religious will be forsaken and the philosophy of independent, materialistic Free-thought will triumph over all religious forms. This possibility increases just as the number of consenting intellects increase, and in the end truth will have for its criterion the universal consent of the race. Religious lies and imposture, no matter how powerfully they have been sustained in the past, must bow to the inevitable. Good angriness for the Free-thought philosophy may be drawn from the mechanical and material inventions, whereby man constantly improves upon the plans and designs of the fancied God, and in the intellectual collisions that must ensue, in the clash of opinion, the melting down of religious intolerance, in the examinations and analyses that are yet to be made, truth and truth alone, will come forth with shining crown. What ever there be that is able to stand this trying ordeal must submit to its fate.

No disgrace can attach to those who, in America, have turned to the religion of Buddha as a substitute for Christianity. Buddhism is a more humane, a more philosophic religion than that of Christ ever knew how to be. There is no harrowing tortures on a cross, no crown of thorns, no cup filled with vinegar, no crucifixion between thieves. Under such conditions the Free-thinker can take a more cheerful view of the race than the Christian can possibly enjoy. The supreme tribunal of truth is in the people. In it man may place implicit confidence. The world may not witness the application of philosophic principles to the practice of our daily life for many years to come, but a start has been made in that direction, and in the end such a result is bound to come.

## GORKY ON THE ENTENTE CORDIALE.

What cares England for blood?  
And what care can the Muscovite empire have for shedding blood?  
None, whatsoever.

That, at least, is the answer that comes from the voice of history, both ancient and modern. England's so-called greatness has come from the thousands slain in battle for conquest only, while Russia has ascended the giddy heights with blood-stained feet until a crimson trail is left in the path she has trod.

Of what possible effect can the arguments, the protestations, the utterances of Maxim Gorky have upon the proposed entente cordiale between these man-slaying nations? None. This does not lead to an inference that Gorky is not correct in his contentions. He is absolutely correct, and the pity is that his words will fall upon barren soil. Neither of the parties to the contract would dare to relinquish one iota of that which induced their present power in the physical and commercial world, and all of Gorky's protests will be in vain. We wish it might be otherwise, but it will not. If the rulers of both of these blood-soaked empires, clogged with religion and steeped in orthodoxy, insist upon the coalition it will come in spite of all obstacles.

Gorky objects to the proposed alliance because the Muscovite party to the contract is "drenched in blood." Small argument for Downing street or St. Petersburg. If either were ever moved by such a sentiment that fact is not of historic record. Their religious pretensions have failed to lead these monopolies into the right path, their politics have gone from bad to worse, and what matters it to them about the shedding of human blood? Is not gold of greater power? England placed firearms into the hands of savages to use them as allies against an Anglo-Saxon foe, and such a nation is not likely to offer a snub to the Czar because he is "seeking to rule," while his official family is "seeking to steal." They are both in the same business. Land and men, it is all the same to them. On thing is sure, and no man could do it better than Gorky, and that is to show by indisputable evidence that Russia would bring disaster upon any so-called civilized nation forming an alliance with her, and that should not be a difficult undertaking.

In the first place Russia could be of no help to any nation in financial distress. She is, herself, a borrowing nation and not a lending nation. The consideration would have to pass to her and could not pass from her. Again, in case of war she would be an absolute drawback, for since the war with Japan her army has become undisciplined and disorganized and unpatriotic. It is one of the political anomalies that there is even talk of an Anglo-Russian alliance.

There is one element by which the alliance may be prevented, and that is the church. The Church of England would never consent to an alliance with Greek Catholicism, unless something tangible in the shape of profit or gain was coming therefrom to the Church of England. The orthodox leaders of Great Britain are a hard-headed lot. They could not be guilty of an original idea. For the sake of a common humanity the Blade hopes that Gorky's plan might become effective, but there is obvious danger the other way.

## THE PEOPLE'S CHURCH.

The late Robert G. Ingersoll once outlined a church to which he could both subscribe and give his membership. Since that time numerous attempts have been made to establish a church that could attract the thinking masses of the country, a church that could hold and boast an intellectual allegiance.

Judging from a communication and circular that

have reached this office, the organization that has made the nearest approach to being such a church is that known as the People's Church, at Aurora, Illinois. On a recent Sunday it rendered what was denominated an "Emerson Program," which consisted altogether of an exposition of the principles enunciated by that great scholar. While, in a measure, there is an attempt at conformity with a ritualistic service, common to the orthodox churches, yet it is such a marked improvement upon the old forms and formulas that it is deserving of wide attention. The church is presided over by J. M. A. Spence. We are not familiar with the name, but if he is in any way responsible for that program he is certainly far removed from orthodoxy. The program includes music, singing, both splendid attractions, as the orthodox church has long since discovered and used to draw the people into its sanctuaries. This is enhanced by responsive readings, and for the occasion mentioned these readings were made up of selections from the writings of Emerson. As there is no taint of orthodoxy to be discovered in them, the Blade can only afford to quote them here. They were as follows:

What is a man born for but to be a reformer, a remaker of what man has made, a renouncer of lies, a restorer of truth and good, imitating that great Nature which embosoms us all.

And which sleeps no moment on an old past, but every hour repairs herself, yielding us every morning a new day, and with every pulsation a new life.

Those would be a man must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must expose if he be goodless.

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it seatters your force. It loses your time, and blurs the impression of your character.

If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible society, vote with a great party,.... under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are.

But do you thing, and I shall know you. Do your work, and you shall re-enforce yourself.... persisting in your path, though you forfeit the little, you gain the great.

You become pronounced. You demonstrate yourself, so as to put yourself out of false relations, and you draw to you the first-born of the world,—those rare pilgrims, before whom the vulgar crowd as spectres and shadows merely.

I thought not to allow any man, because he has broad lands, to feel that he is rich in my presence. I ought to make him feel that I can do without his riches, that I cannot be bought,—neither by comfort, neither by pride.

Following this, another service was devoted to Walt Whitman, and the indications point to the opening of such a church as Ingersoll described.

## SUICIDE AND INSANITY.

That religion fanaticism will lead inevitably to insanity or suicide, or both, is now too well demonstrated to need argument.

Our jails are filled with Christians, among them many preachers of the faith, and our asylums can hold hundreds who have suffered a mental aberration because of too much religion. Every day some new grave is opened, somewhere, to receive what is left of one who has taken his or her own life through religious zeal, and every day the door of an asylum ward swings open to admit another religious devotee within its four walls.

If any argument were needed these constitute an abundance. Scientific and historic facts are unnecessary. Religion can be judged by its own fruit and its judgment will be bad enough if righteously rendered. It stands self-condemned, self-convicted. It is being proven to be more and more a curse to humanity as the days come and go. Innumerable cases are on record and new ones are coming to light that place religion, especially the Christian brand, in the category of evils that are to be condemned by all mankind.

Some may say, that we would not condemn religion because of one pervert, because of one and case, any more than we would condemn music because of an occasional discord. There is much force in such an argument, but we have yet to find one instance where religion has worked absolute good. It may be true that many religious men and women are good. But it is enough to say that they would have been just as good if they had never known the Christian religion. They are not good because they are religious. Goodness does not depend upon religion, but religion steals all it can lay its hands upon from that which is good and appropriates it as its own. Morality is claimed as an adjunct of Christianity when as a matter of fact it was taught and practised long ages before the Christian religion was known. Humanity is claimed as being essentially Christian and yet honesty was inculcated and lived up to by men and women who lived and died before Christianity was born and it is being inculcated and lived up to by men and women today who are in no sense tainted with Christianity.

During the past week the Blade has been in receipt of a copy of the Wauchula Telegram, a weekly newspaper published at Wauchula, Florida. At the same time we received a newspaper clipping from another source which has the appearance of being from the Louisville Evening Post. The former is evidently edited by one who has implicit belief in the theory that his own particular religion is the Simon-pure brand, and all others impostures. The latter is edited by one who is not over flushed with any religion. The former contains a three column article with scare headlines which inform its readers that "Religious Fanaticism drove Williams to a Suicide's Grave" and the proceeds to narrate two Pastoral prescriptions for being the cause of it. From the report they were the direct cause and they ought to be prosecuted for having contributed to the man's sad and untimely death. The

clipping tells us that one, James M. Daniel, of Eldorado, Oklahoma, has gone insane over religion and was committed to an asylum. Both items have been accorded prominent places in the daily press and they should teach the people of America a fearful lesson. The very reading thereof ought to be a warning that the people should let all religion severely alone.

Assuming that the editor of the Wauchula Telegram is a Christian of a special variety, it is amusing to read what he has to say concerning Christians of another variety. He denounces them as fanatics, perhaps, forgetting that they left the same way concerning his religion. It is seldom, however, that a coroner's jury renders a verdict that a suicide came to his death because of this religion fanaticism, and yet the jury that sat upon the inquest of this rendered the following:—

"We, the jury impaneled to inquire into the death of Thomas F. Williams, of Crewsville, have found upon a thorough investigation that said Thomas F. Williams came to his death by a self-inflicted wound with a knife, stabbing himself between the fourth and fifth ribs on his left side, near the heart, and that said wound was inflicted by his own hand causing suicide. We find upon examining witnesses that the said Thomas F. Williams at the time of his death was suffering from melancholia, brought on by religious excitement. So say we all."

Commenting upon the subject, the editor of Telegram says:—

"A suicide's grave, a heart-broken mother and an indignant community is the result of the ravings of a bunch of religious fanatics who have been holding forth in Wauchula for about two weeks prior to last Monday, when their doctrines culminated in the death, by his own hand, of T. F. Williams, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Eph. Williams, of Crewsville."

How pleasant it shall be for these brethren to dwell together in unity, and whilst convincing arguments were given against religion in all its shapes and forms.

## A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT.

One by one the pilgrims are coming. The Blade sometimes thinks that if we leave the pious elements to their meditations they will ultimately work our way, or else, a little prodding now and then, they do some good by helping them.

For a generation or two the Free-thinkers have been urging the necessity of protecting our schools from the pernicious influences of religion and the Blade has made ardent advocacy of that doctrine. Now help has come from an unexpected source.

In many parts of the country commencement exercises have been held and both young and old in all sorts and manner of schools are preparing for the vacation period. From the infant classes, through the grammar grades, to the high schools and collegiate institutions, the past few weeks have been exceedingly important, but in none has this been so marked as when the graduating class of the Louisville University school gave its exercises before the women's club in the Kentucky Metropolitan a few days ago. Seventeen young men and women took part in a good program, but the climax came, the crown and summit of things were reached when Miss Helen Amelia Flansburg, one of the speakers delivered an address upon the subject of "Religious Instruction in our Public Schools."

We do not feel like spoiling her argument by attempting to offer one of our own. For this reason we reproduce what is reported of that speech and assert that we endorse it in full. We might add that if more women like her could be found in the world, with the courage to think and the courage to express what she does think, it would be happier, brighter and better for their having been in it. Upon the subject assigned to her she said:—

"There is a movement on foot, quite stealthily, limited as yet in its activity, but none the less dangerous for all that, its supporters might be divided into two classes, stirred by different motives and with different ends in view. The one, using an unlawful means to gain a selfish end, the other simply mistaken, short-sighted. The first is composed of zealots of different denominations, who seeing the inability of churches to hold the men of the day with whom crowd this religion is declining, and they raise a great hue and cry. 'The people have ceased to believe! Let us save the little ones!' But well they know that to introduce openly into the school supported by the common purse any particular dogma would be to call forth a storm of indignation from the adherents of other faiths, and so they plan to edge in with a shallow, neutral, lifeless sort of religion which, they say, will offend no one. Friends who actuate it are mistaken if they think to achieve their end, even should they succeed in pushing religion into the public school.

"The other class is made up of well meaning, but misdirected folks who are the more dangerous because their motive is really sincere, and they appear, not to be seeking innovation, but to defend conditions already existing in a great many cities. 'You are making a great fuss about nothing, they answer to protests, a moral atmosphere is essential to the school-room, and what harm can there possibly be in reading a verse from the Bible and saying 'The Lord's Prayer?' Practically everyone believes in these."

"For the good of the individual, for the good of the schools, for the good of religion itself, let us keep the public school free from that function which belongs to the church and the home—the formal teaching of religion."

## JONAH AND THE WHALE.

Did the whale swallow Jonah?  
After all the centuries that have intervened since the Lord God is said to have prevented Jonah from crossing the state line and getting beyond





**Although Coming in the Guise of a New Religion,  
its Principles are Superior to those  
of Christianity**

Their idea of a Supreme being is not a personality but an essence. Life exists in the creation of centers of consciousness and intelligence in this

But the few knew; the few who were sent to my sister and I & honestly. They knew that I could endure the furies no longer. That I had become convinced no man who sincerely employed his mind and struggled to find the truth could do so with impunity in the Methodist Church. I had no longing for the crown of martyrdom of the heretic's glory; so quietly I resolved upon retirement to await a better day when perhaps a more honest church and a more enlightened

Ancient philosophy called Christian doctrine is not necessarily religious; being uncient science, it is religion only when made so by theology. It can be substituted by modern science.

The public men of every age have for the most part pretended to believe in the prevailing superstition. Cicero, one of the greatest of Romans, was a high priest of paganism, for such was the road to the political preferment to which he aspired. Cicero, however, did not believe in the superstitions whose robes he wore and immured his mind. He was so sensible that he did not understand how two priests could pass each other without smiling! Long before Cicero was born, Lucretius had written his poem on "The Nature of Things," and even before Lucretius, the wisest of the Greeks had torn the current religion to shreds; in spite of which, however, Jupiter and Venus were worshipped for thousands of years. The people of Athens did not exist, and the Athenians did not exist.

How often, O Reader, have you heard and continue to hear the ominous. Sh—! Hypocritical wind whistling through rascally Sh—, accompanied by shoulder-shrugs, a glint of eyes

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